NEWS

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS

TEXTILE PLANT EMPLOYMENT IN THE SOUTHEAST: THIRD QUARTER 2002

Textile plant employment in the Southeast[1], not seasonally adjusted, declined by 200 jobs or more in four of the nine states in the region where published data are available, according to Janet S. Rankin, regional commissioner for the Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, in Atlanta. Georgia was the only state in the region to post employment increases over the quarter, while employment was essentially unchanged in four southeastern states. Nationally, textile employment dropped by 5,800 jobs (-1.3 percent) over the quarter.

Third Quarter Southeast Textile Employment (Not Seasonally Adjusted)

In the Southeast, employment in the textile industry declined more rapidly than in the second quarter of 2002, but at a slower pace compared to the third quarter of 2001. Of the nine states reporting employment in the textile industry, Virginia recorded the largest decrease, dropping 600 jobs (-3.0 percent), followed by South Carolina, which lost 400 jobs (-0.7 percent). Georgia recorded the largest increase in jobs, increasing by 400 jobs (0.4 percent). In four states, Alabama, Florida, Kentucky, and Mississippi, employment was essentially unchanged over the quarter. At 118,700 jobs, North Carolina continued to record the largest number of textile jobs among any state in the nation, although this was 0.3 percent fewer (-300 jobs) compared to their industry's employment in the second quarter.

Over-the-year Southeast Textile Employment (Not Seasonally Adjusted)

From the third quarter of 2001 through the third quarter of 2002, eight of nine states recorded drops in textile employment. North Carolina posted the largest employment decline (-5,600), while Virginia reported the largest percentage decline (-19.3 percent). Georgia was the only state not posting a decline, showing no change in textile employment over the year. Nationally, textile employment

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[1] The quarterly release of Textile Plant Employment in the Southeast has been expanded to include all of the South Atlantic Census Division (Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, and West Virginia) and the East South Central Census Division (Alabama, Kentucky, Mississippi, and Tennessee.).

declined by 41,800 jobs (-8.9 percent). Both the number of jobs lost and the percentage decline was smaller this year, than for the comparable previous 12 months.

As industry employment continues to decline, it is becoming more concentrated in a few southeastern states. Over the year, Georgia's share of textile employment grew from 19.5 percent to 21.4 percent. Similarly, North Carolina's share has increased from 26.4 percent in the third quarter of 2001 to 27.6 percent in the third quarter of 2002 despite recent losses in the industry. Combined, Georgia and North Carolina accounted for 49 percent of the industry's total employment in the nation compared to 45.9 percent last year.

At the same time, two of three states in the region with the smallest textile employment posted a decreasing share of the industry's total employment. Florida's employment declined from 0.59 percent (2,800 jobs) in the third quarter of 2001 to 0.54 percent (2,300 jobs) for the third quarter of 2002, while Mississippi's share dropped from 0.68 percent (3,200 jobs) in 2001 to 0.6 percent (2,600 jobs) in 2002. In contrast, although Kentucky lost 200 jobs over the year, its share of the industry's employment rose from 0.85 percent (4,000 jobs) in 2001 to 0.88 percent (3,800 jobs) in 2002.

Third Quarter Southeast Textile Average Weekly Hours and Average Hourly Earnings

Three of the nine states posted an increase in average weekly hours over the quarter. Kentucky recorded the largest increase in weekly hours (1.8 hours), while Mississippi recorded the region's largest decline (-1.6 hours). Six of the nine states posted increases in average hourly earnings of 0.2 percent or greater. Georgia reported the largest increase (+35 cents), and the largest percentage increase (3.2 percent). Florida recorded the largest decrease over the quarter (-21 cents) and the largest percentage decline (-2.7 percent). Kentucky continued to report the highest hourly earnings among southeastern textile states, averaging $13.24 per hour. Florida recorded the lowest average hourly earnings at $7.51 per hour.

Technical Note

Definitions. Employment data refer to persons on establishment payrolls who receive pay for any part of the pay period which includes the 12th of the month, except for federal government employment, which represents the number of persons who occupied positions on the last day of the month. Persons are counted at their place of work rather than at their place of residence; those appearing on more than one payroll are counted on each payroll. Industries are classified on the basis of their principal product or activity in accordance with the 1987 Standard Industrial Classification Manual.

Annual revisions. All estimates in this release are adjusted to first quarter 2001 benchmark levels. Data relate to all full-time and part-time employment in Alabama, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia and were compiled by state employment security agencies in cooperation with the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Data are based on the 1987 Standard Industrial Classification Manual. A brief technical description of statistics based on establishment records is presented in the explanatory notes of Employment and Earnings, a publication of the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Employment estimates are adjusted annually to a complete count of jobs, called benchmarks, derived principally from tax reports which are submitted by employers who are covered under state unemployment insurance (UI) laws. The benchmark information is used to adjust the monthly estimates between the new benchmark and the preceding one and also to establish the level of employment for the new benchmark month. Thus, the benchmarking process establishes the level of employment, and the sample is used to measure the month-to-month changes in the level for the subsequent months.

Seasonal adjustment. Seasonally adjusted payroll employment totals for states are computed by aggregating independently adjusted series for major industry divisions. Revisions of historical data for the most recent 5 years are made once a year, coincident with annual benchmark adjustments.

Caution on aggregating state data. State estimation procedures are designed to produce accurate data for each individual state. BLS independently develops a national employment series; state estimates are not forced to sum to national totals. Because each state series is subject to larger sampling and nonsampling errors than the national series, summing them cumulates individual state level errors and can cause significant distortions at an aggregate level. Due to these statistical limitations, BLS does not compile a "sum-of-states" employment series, and cautions users that such a series is subject to a relatively large and volatile error structure.

Reliability of the estimates

The estimates presented in this release are based on sample survey and administrative data and thus are subject to sampling and other types of errors. Sampling error is a measure of sampling variability--that is, variation that occurs by chance because a sample rather than the entire population is surveyed. Survey data also are subject to nonsampling errors, such as those which can be introduced into the data collection and processing operations. Estimates not directly derived from sample surveys are subject to additional errors resulting from the special estimation processes used. The sums of individual items may not always equal the totals shown in the same tables because of rounding. With respect to the LAUS program, unemployment rates are computed, in most instances, from unrounded data rather than from data that may be displayed in the tables; differences, however, are generally insignificant.

Employment estimates. Measures of sampling error are not available for state CES data, but the relatively large size of the samples maintained by the state agencies and the annual adjustment of employment estimates to more recent benchmark levels assure a high degree of accuracy. Information on recent benchmark revisions for states is available upon request.

Additional information

More complete information on the technical procedures used to develop these estimates and additional data appear in Employment and Earnings, which is available by subscription for $50.00 a year from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402 (telephone 202-512-1800), and from the BLS Handbook of Methods, Bulletin 2490, August 1997. Employment data from the CES program are available at http://www.bls.gov/sae/. Information in this release are available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: 202-691-5200; TDD message referral phone: 1-800-877-8339.

Table 1. Textile plant employment for the United States and southeastern states, not seasonally adjusted (numbers in thousands)

	Employment				2nd Qtr 2002 - 3rd Qtr 2002		3rd Qtr 2001 - 3rd Qtr 2002	
	3rd Qtr 2001	1st Qtr 2002	2nd Qtr 2002	3rd Qtr 2002	Net change	Pct. change	Net change	Pct. change
United States	471.2	438.8	435.2	429.4	-5.8	-1.3	-41.8	-8.9
Alabama	34.8	34.1	34.3	34.3	0.0	0.0	-0.5	-1.4
Delaware	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)
District of Columbia	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)
Florida	2.8	2.2	2.2	2.3	0.1	4.5	-0.5	-17.9
Georgia	92.0	90.1	91.6	92.0	0.4	0.4	0.0	0.0
Kentucky	4.0	3.9	3.9	3.8	-0.1	-2.6	-0.2	-5.0
Maryland	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)
Mississippi	3.2	2.8	2.6	2.6	0.0	0.0	-0.6	-18.8
North Carolina	124.3	119.4	119.0	118.7	-0.3	-0.3	-5.6	-4.5
South Carolina	61.6	59.2	58.3	57.9	-0.4	-0.7	-3.7	-6.0
Tennessee	13.7	12.9	12.7	12.5	-0.2	-1.6	-1.2	-8.8
Virginia	23.8	21.2	19.8	19.2	-0.6	-3.0	-4.6	-19.3
West Virginia	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)

(1) Data not available.
Note: Totals may not add due to rounding.

Table 2. Textile plant average weekly hours and average hourly earnings for southeastern states, not seasonally adjusted

	Average weekly hours				Average hourly earnings			
	3rd Qtr 2001	1st Qtr 2002	2nd Qtr 2002	3rd Qtr 2002	3rd Qtr 2001	1st Qtr 2002	2nd Qtr 2002	3rd Qtr 2002
Alabama	40.7	41.2	41.5	41.4	10.51	10.62	10.77	10.86
Delaware	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)
District of Columbia	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)
Florida	46.7	46.0	45.7	44.2	9.03	8.52	7.72	7.51
Georgia	42.8	42.7	44.1	44.5	10.96	10.84	10.89	11.24
Kentucky	38.9	39.8	41.7	43.5	12.40	12.76	13.05	13.24
Maryland	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)
Mississippi	39.6	43.6	43.2	41.6	9.58	10.11	10.05	10.34
North Carolina	38.4	40.9	41.9	41.1	10.85	11.09	11.03	11.15
South Carolina	40.5	40.7	40.9	40.8	10.65	10.79	10.83	10.87
Tennessee	40.6	40.6	41.4	39.5	10.70	10.85	11.07	11.03
Virginia	41.6	41.8	43.5	44.3	11.19	11.12	11.34	11.25
West Virginia	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)

(1) Data not available.

Table 3. Nonfarm employment in the Southeast by major industry division, seasonally adjusted (numbers in thousands)

	Employment				2nd Qtr 2002 - 3rd Qtr 2002		3rd Qtr 2001 - 3rd Qtr 2002	
	3rd Qtr 2001	1st Qtr 2002	2nd Qtr 2002	3rd Qtr 2002	Net change	Pct. change	Net change	Pct. change
Southeast								
Alabama	1,915.2	1,900.3	1,898.1	1,895.6	-2.5	-0.1	-19.6	-1.0
Delaware	418.6	416.0	416.1	415.7	-0.4	-0.1	-2.9	-0.7
District of Columbia	654.8	649.3	651.7	650.9	-0.8	-0.1	-3.9	-0.6
Florida	7,239.8	7,176.6	7,176.8	7,263.1	86.3	1.2	23.3	0.3
Georgia	3,952.4	3,872.6	3,882.6	3,867.2	-15.4	-0.4	-85.2	-2.2
Kentucky	1,813.6	1,826.4	1,824.4	1,832.3	7.9	0.4	18.7	1.0
Maryland	2,470.5	2,457.3	2,453.7	2,444.3	-9.4	-0.4	-26.2	-1.1
Mississippi	1,135.5	1,131.6	1,129.5	1,131.9	2.4	0.2	-3.6	-0.3
North Carolina	3,897.5	3,882.7	3,873.7	3,892.5	18.8	0.5	-5.0	-0.1
South Carolina	1,833.9	1,828.8	1,826.9	1,828.9	2.0	0.1	-5.0	-0.3
Tennessee	2,706.6	2,718.8	2,703.7	2,701.6	-2.1	-0.1	-5.0	-0.2
Virginia	3,526.2	3,499.8	3,501.4	3,495.4	-6.0	-0.2	-30.8	-0.9
West Virginia	734.1	735.6	731.0	727.4	-3.6	-0.5	-6.7	-0.9

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding.